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SUBJECT: ROME GENEVA GROUP:POST WFS5YL AND TERM LIMITS

REFTEL: ROME 3214

1. SUMMARY. ROME GENEVA GROUP (MAJOR DONORS) MEMBERS CHARACTERIZED THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED WORLD FOOD SUMMIT:FIVE YEARS LATER (WFS5YL) AS NEITHER A SUCCESS NOR A FAILURE. MEMBERS DISCUSSED WAYS TO REVITALIZE THE WFS5YL FOLLOW-UP MECHANISM IN ORDER TO AVOID HOLDING ANOTHER SUMMIT-LEVEL MEETING IN 2006 (THE YEAR ORIGINALLY DESIGNATED FOR HOLDING THE "MID-TERM REVIEW" OF THE FIRST WORLD FOOD SUMMIT.) EU MEMBERS OF THE GROUP ANNOUNCED THAT THEY WOULD BE STARTING CONSULTATIONS ON A TERM LIMIT INITIATIVE SHORTLY. END SUMMARY.

2. THE ROME-BASED GENEVA GROUP MET JUNE 25, 2002 TO REVIEW THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED WORLD FOOD SUMMIT: FIVE YEARS LATER (WFS5YL) AND DISCUSS OTHER GENEVA GROUP BUSINESS.

WFS5YL POST MORTEM - LIVING UP TO (LOW) EXPECTATIONS

3. ON BALANCE, GENEVA GROUP MEMBERS FELT THAT THE WFS5YL WAS "NOT A SUCCESS, BUT NOT A FAILURE." FRANCE FELT THAT PRESS COVERAGE HAD HELPED FOCUS ATTENTION ON THE ISSUE, BUT WAS DISAPPOINTED WITH THE NGO/CSO REACTION TO THE SUMMIT (SPECIFICALLY THAT THEY FELT THEY WERE "NOT LISTENED TO.") WHILE DIRECTOR GENERAL (DG) DIOUF HAD REPORTEDLY TOLD THE NGO FORUM THAT "THE ABSENCE OF OECD LEADERS IS AN INDICATION OF THE LEVEL OF PRIORITY THEY ATTACH TO HUNGER," GENEVA GROUP MEMBERS AGREED WITH THE U.K. REPRESENTATIVE THAT THIS WAS 1) IRRESPONSIBLE AND 2) NOT TRUE. THE OVERALL LEVEL OF ATTENDANCE MATCHED THEIR EXPECTATIONS; AND GENEVA GROUP MEMBERS WERE SATISFIED THAT THEIR GOVERNMENTS HAD BEEN REPRESENTED AT SUFFICIENTLY SENIOR LEVELS.

4. GERMANY EXPRESSED SATISFACTION THAT THE EVENT DIDN'T "TAKE ANY STEPS BACK." SWEDEN OPINED THAT THE NEW FOCUS ON AGRICULTURE AS AN ENGINE OF DEVELOPMENT WAS POSITIVE, BUT NOTED HIS COUNTRY'S DISAPPOINTMENT THAT PARTICIPATION OF OTHER UN AGENCIES HAD NOT BEEN AS BROAD AS IT COULD HAVE BEEN. THE BELGIAN AND SWISS REPRESENTATIVES NOTED THAT THEIR NATIONAL PRESSES HAD BEEN CRITICAL OF THE SUMMIT FOR WASTING MONEY (SWITZERLAND) AND FOR NOT HAVING HIGHER-LEVEL OECD REPRESENTATION (BELGIUM). THE SWISS REPRESENTATIVES INFORMED THAT GROUP THAT HE WOULD ASK FOR A FULL ACCOUNTING OF WFS5YL COSTS AT THE SEPTEMBER FINANCE COMMITTEE SESSION.

5. THE U.K. REPRESENTATIVE STATED THAT THE WFS5YL HAD ALL ALONG BEEN A "PERSONAL PROJECT" FOR DIOUF: IT HAD BEEN "NON-INCLUSIVE" OF MEMBERS AND OF OTHER UN AGENCIES (INCLUDING UNDP, THE "SCORE-KEEPER FOR THE MILLENIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS.") HE NOTED IN THIS REGARD THAT THE WORLD FOOD PROGRAM AND THE INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT HAD BEEN DENIED PERMISSION TO HOST EVENTS. THE U.K. REPRESENTATIVE CALLED THE WORLD BANK'S 2002 RURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY A "MUCH MORE INTELLIGENT FOCUS ON AGRICULTURE" AND CONCLUDED THAT AGRICULTURE HAD MOVED UP "THE AGENDA" BECAUSE OF THE WORLD BANK AND THE UPCOMING WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (WSSD) -- NOT BECAUSE OF THE FAO.

6. U.S. DEL GAVE A MORE POSITIVE IMPRESSION OF THE SUMMIT, REFLECTING THE FACT THAT THE UNITED STATES CAME TO THE WFS5YL WITH NEW INITIATIVES AND A RENEWED FOCUS ON AGRICULTURE AND WAS THUS ABLE TO STAGE SUCCESSFUL SIDE-EVENTS AND ENGAGE IN PRODUCTIVE BILATERAL MEETINGS.

7. GENEVA GROUP MEMBERS EXCHANGED VIEWS ON THE SIDE EVENTS (GENERALLY CONSIDERED POORLY ORGANIZED) AND THE ROUNDTABLES (GIVEN A "B" GRADE FOR EFFORT). THE MULTISTAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE WAS NOT CONSIDERED PRODUCTIVE, ALTHOUGH THE U.K. SPECIFICALLY PRAISED THE U.S. INTERVENTION. FAO'S EFFORTS ON BEHALF OF AGRICULTURE FOR NEPAD (MUCH OF IT A PLUG FOR THE FAO'S SPECIAL PROGRAM FOR FOOD SECURITY) WERE CHARACTERIZED BY THE U.K. AS "OLD-THINKING."

WHITHER THE DIRECTOR GENERAL?

8. GENEVA GROUP MEMBERS AGREED THAT THE DG'S STANDING HAD PROBABLY BEEN WEAKENED WITH THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE FACT THAT THE WFS5YL HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO GENERATE NEW RESOURCES (ALTHOUGH DONORS HAD LONG WARNED DIOUF THAT IT SHOULD NOT BE A "PLEDGING

CONFERENCE.") ON G-77 VIEWS OF THE SUMMIT AS A WHOLE, GENEVA GROUP MEMBERS REPORTED THAT THEY HAD HEARD VIEWS RANGING FROM "WASTE OF TIME" TO "FIASCO" FROM G-77 COLLEAGUES.

9. GENEVA GROUP MEMBERS NOTED THAT THE DG'S USD 100 MILLION TRUST FUND SEEMED PRETTY MUCH A MORIBUND ISSUE (THE ONLY COUNTRY OTHER THAN ITALY THAT HAS PLEDGED IS NIGERIA) AND THAT THE DG IS NOW PUSHING HARD ON CONTRIBUTIONS FOR THE SPECIAL PROGRAM FOR FOOD SECURITY (SPFS). THIS SEEMED INFELICITOUS TO GENEVA GROUP MEMBERS, PARTICULARLY IN VIEW OF THE POOR MARKS THAT THE SPFS EARNED IN A RECENTLY CONCLUDED EVOLUTION.

WFS5YL DECLARATION -- THE ALLIANCE AGAINST HUNGER -- ROLE OF CFS

10. GENEVA GROUP MEMBERS AGREED WITH SWEDEN THAT THE NEGOTIATIONS OF THE DECLARATION HAD NOT BEEN PARTICULARLY CONFRONTATIONAL. THE U.K. REPRESENTATIVE RECALLED THAT DEVELOPING COUNTRIES HAD SHOWN NO INTEREST IN INDICATING THE LEVEL OF RESOURCES THEY THEMSELVES SOUGHT TO DEVOTE TO AGRICULTURE AND THAT THIS RELUCTANCE HAD FATALLY WEAKENED THE G-77'S EFFORTS TO HAVE THE DONORS COMMIT TO A SPECIFIC LEVEL FOR AGRICULTURAL ODA. THE U.S. NOTED ITS RESERVATION ON THE NEGOTIATION OF VOLUNTARY GUIDELINES ON THE RIGHT TO FOOD. (COMMENT: WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE UNITED STATES, NO GENEVA GROUP MEMBERS SPOKE ON OR ALLUDED TO THE RIGHT TO FOOD DISCUSSIONS. END COMMENT).

11. MEMBERS WERE PLEASED THAT THERE WAS NO NEW STRUCTURE OR BODY UNDERLYING THE "ALLIANCE AGAINST HUNGER" AND WERE SATISFIED WITH THE ALLIANCE'S FOCUS ON BRINGING IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR AND NGO'S. THEY AGREED THAT FAO'S COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY (CFS) NEEDED TO BE STRENGTHENED TO FOLLOW UP ON THE WFS5YL.

12. ITALY LINKED THE NEW ALLIANCE WITH THE OLDER "POLO ROMANO" IDEA (WHICH SOUGHT TO LINK INSTITUTIONALLY THE THREE ROME AGENCIES DEALING WITH FOOD AND AGRICULTURE). HE STATED THAT THE CFS WOULD BE A GOOD PLACE TO WORK ON THE "SYNERGY BETWEEN THE AGENCIES." THE U.K. AGREED THAT MORE "OOMPH" NEEDED TO BE GIVEN TO THE CFS AND NOTED THAT THE CURRENT CFS "DOESN'T WORK," NOT LEAST OF ALL BECAUSE OF THE LACK OF REPORTING (PARTICULARLY FROM DEVELOPING COUNTRIES) ON THE WORLD FOOD SUMMIT PLAN OF ACTION. THE U.K. NOTED THAT CFS HAD A NUMBER BUILT-IN ADVANTAGES: IT WAS OPEN TO ALL UN MEMBERS, IT HAD A STANDING BUREAU: IT COULD BE TURNED INTO A BODY WHERE THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY MET ONCE A YEAR TO FOCUS GOOD ATTENTION ON THE ISSUES. EXPANDING THE BUREAU WAS DISCUSSED (THE BUREAU DOES NOT HAVE REPRESENTATIVES OF ALL REGIONAL GROUPS) ALTHOUGH IT WAS NOTED THAT THIS WOULD CREATE MORE G-77 POSITIONS THAN OECD POSITIONS.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IN 2006

13. MEMBERS RECALLED THAT THE FIRST WORLD FOOD SUMMIT CALLED FOR A MID-TERM REVIEW IN 2006. GENEVA GROUP MEMBERS SPOKE WITH CONCERN ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT THE DG WOULD CALL FOR A "WORLD FOOD SUMMIT: 10 YEARS LATER" TO COMMEMORATE THE OCCASION, AND DISCUSSED WAYS TO ENSURE THAT A "REINVIGORATED CFS" MIGHT FORESTALL SUCH A POSSIBILITY. THE POSSIBILITY OF WORKING THROUGH THE CFS BUREAU (FRANCE AND THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA ARE THE OECD MEMBERS ON THE BUREAU FOR THE NEXT TWO YEARS) WAS RAISED, AS WELL AS WORKING THROUGH INFORMAL CONTACTS AND REPRESENTATIONAL EVENTS. THE U.K. NOTED THAT PART OF THE CFS REVITALIZATION WOULD INVOLVE KEEPING CLOSE CONTACT WITH WHAT WAS HAPPENING AT THE UN IN NEW YORK WITH THE MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS (FAO HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR FOOD AVAILABILITY -- A SUB-SECTOR OF POVERTY) SO AS "NOT TO FALL INTO ISOLATION."

EU INITIATIVE ON DG TERM LIMITS

14. THE U.K. STATED THAT THE EU WAS EXPECTING CLEARANCE SHORTLY IN ORDER TO INITIATE CONSULTATIONS WITH OTHER GROUPS ON REINSTATING FAO DIRECTOR GENERAL TERM LIMITS BEFORE THE SUMMER HOLIDAYS. U.S. (ACTING PERM REP) AND NEW ZEALAND NOTED THAT THIS WAS AN EXISTING GENEVA GROUP ISSUE AND REMINDED THE EU REPS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF CONSULTING WITH OTHER GROUPS BEFORE DELIVERING A "FAIT ACCOMPLI." THE U.K. TOOK NOTE OF THE COMMENTS. HEILEMAN